

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DJIBOU 00866 131717Z

ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 DODE-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0999

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOIKM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SANA

COMIDEASTFOR

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L DJIBOUTI 0866

LIMDIS

BRUSSELS FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE

E.O.11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: DJ, PINS, PINT, PGOV

SUBJECT: DJIBOUTI PRIME MINISTER PRESENTS PRESIDENT WITH AFAR
DEMANDS

SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER ABDALLAH KAMIL HAS PRESENTED PRESIDENT
HASSAN GOULED WITH DEMANDS FOR A CONSTITUTION, RELEASE OF AFAR
PRISONERS, AND INCREASED AFAR REPRESENTATION IN THE MILITARY
SERVICES AS A PRICE FOR CONTINUED AFAR SUPPORT. END SUMMARY.

1. THE PRESENT DJIBOUTI GOVERNMENT, HEADED BY PRIME MINISTER-
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 DJIBOU 00866 131717Z

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS-MINISTER OF DEFENSE ABDALLAH KAMIL, IS
IN PRINCIPLE A TEMPORARY CONSTRUCT MEANT TO PROVIDE FOR SOME
CONTINUING NATIONAL UNITY AT THE TOP WHILE AWAITING RESOLUTION
OF THE CRISIS BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE TERRORIST ATTACK AT THE
PALMIER EN ZINC IN DECEMBER, THE SUBSEQUENT ARRESTS OF SUSPECTED
AFARS, AND THE RESIGNATION OF THE AFAR PRIME MINISTER AHMED DINI.
KAMIL AGREED TO THIS "TEMPORARY" SOLUTION IN FEBRUARY TO GIVE

PRESIDENT HASSAN GOULED AND THE SOMALI HARD-LINERS TIME TO CONSIDER AND ACCEDE TO THE AFAR INSISTANCE ON REDRESSMENT OF THE ETHNIC IMBALANCE WHICH HAD BEEN CREATED, PRIMARILY IN THE MILITARY SERVICES. KAMIL, WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE AFAR MEMBERS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, HAS NOW DECIDED THAT AFTER SIX MONTHS OF INACTION, HRESIDENT GOULED MUST BE PUSHED TO TAKE SOME STEPS TO REASSURE THE AFAR MINORITY AND SECURE SOME PROTECTION FOR THEIR POSITION IN ISSA SOMALI-DOMINATED DJIBOUTI. KAMIL, WHO DISCUSSED THESE DEVELOPMENTS WITH CHARGE ON JUNE 13, HAS MADE THREE DEMANDS WITH A PERHAPS UNSPOKEN BUT CLEAR THREAT TO RESIGN IF THE DEMANDS ARE NOT MET.

2. THE FIRST, THE DRAFTING AND ADOPTION OF A CONSTITUTION (SOMETHING WHICH THE GROD HAS YET TO SEE A YEAR AFTER INDEPENDENCE), IS DESIGNED PRIMARILY TO GIVE THE PRIME MINISTER SOME REAL AUTHORITY OVER THE GOVERNMENT AS A WHOLE. KAMIL INSISTS THAT AT PRESENT THE COORDINATING MECHANISM IS THE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL CABINET AND IN FACT EACH MINISTER IS FREE TO RUN HIS OWN FIEF, FREQUENTLY STAFFING IT ALMOST ENTIRETY WITH MEMBERS OF A SINGLE ETHNIC OR EVEN SUB-TRIBAL OROUP.

3. A SECOND DEMAND IS THE RELEASE OF AFARS UNDER DETENTION FOR POLITICAL REASONS, PARTICULARLY THE FIFTEEN OR SO DETAINED FOLLOWING THE PALMIER EN ZINN INCIDENT OF DECEMBER LAST. KAMIL INSISTS THAT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE AGAINST THESE YOUNG MEN.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 DJIBOU 00866 131717Z

4. THE THIRD AND KEY DEMAND IS FOR INCREASED AFAR REPRESENTATION IN THE MILITARY SERVICES AND BUREAUCRACY. KAM T ADMITTED PRIVATELY THAT IN FACT HE WOULD NOT PUSH FOR EQUALITY OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE CIVILIAN STRUCTURE, BUT THAT THE ARMED SERVICES, WHERE AFARS ARE NOW REDUCED TO THIRTY PERCENT REPRESENTATION, MUST BE STAFFED ON A FIFTY/FIFTY BASIS.

5. AHMED DINI, WHO CALLED ON CHARGE JUNE 13, INSISTS THAT AFARS WOULD WISH PRIME MINISTER TO STAY IN GOVERNMENT EVEN IF GOULED CONTINUED TO TEMPORIZE. KAMIL HIMSELF PRIVATELY CONFIDES THAT HE WILL DO HIS BEST TO AVOID A RUPTURE, BUT HE HAS CHOSEN AN ADVANTAGEOUS TIME TO CONFRONT THE PRESIDENT SINCE THE PROSPECT OF AFAR MINISTERIAL RESIGNATIONS JUST BEFORE INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATION ON JUNE 27 WOULD BE PARTICULARLY EMBARRASING. FURTHER, ACCORDING TO THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR, DURING HIS RECENT TRIP TO PARIS, OOULED WAS STRONGLY URGED BY GISCARD D'ESTAING TO CORRECT THE ETHNIC UMBALANCE IN THE ARMED FORCES AND ACHIEVE A GREATER DEGREE OF RECONNILATION WITH THE AFARS. (THE FRENCH ARE CONSIDERING FUNDING ADDITIONAL POSITIONS IN THE ARMY TO FACILITATE THIS). DESPITE THESE PRESSURES, HOWEVER, OBSERVORS HERE BELIEVE PRESIDENT OOULED WILL PROBABLY REFUSE TO YIELD. HE IS AN HONEST MAN WHO ALL AGREE DESIRES THE BEST FOR HIS COUNTRY, BUT HE HAS A MORE THAN

ORDINARY DISLIKE OF DIFFICULT DECISIONS, AND IS SURROUNDED BY
ETHNIC SOMALI ADVISORS, MOST OF WHOM WILL NOT SUPPORT A NON-
CILIATORY APPROACH. IN ADDITION, HE HAS LATELY BEEN SUFFERING
FROM A PAINFUL ATTACK OF SCIATICA, A CONDITION WHICH WILL FURTHER
INCREASE HIS DISINCLINATION TOWARDS DYNAMIC LEADERSHIP ON THIS
ISSUE.
SCOTT

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